The following pages include the Proficiency Level Descriptors for each content area. The Proficiency Level Descriptors are grouped by grade cluster 3/4, 5/6, 7/8, or 9/10 and describe the skills necessary at each of the achievement levels. The achievement levels are: Advanced, Proficient, Below Proficient, and Far Below Proficient.

Alaska's Alternate Reading, Writing, and Mathematics
Proficiency Level Descriptors – Grades 3 and 4

Proficiency Level	Reading	Writing	Math	Score Ranges
Advanced	The student decodes or identifies simple sight words; identifies the main idea and/or main character from a story read aloud; identifies simple sight words in addition to his/her name; identifies all letter sound relationships; and blends more than 5 sounds to make words.	The student uses basic conventions of writing (e.g., capitalization, spacing/alignment, left to right); and communicates ideas to others by producing a graphic product (story/event) through the use of pictures and/or symbols.	The student rote counts single digit numbers to ten; identifies first, second, and last; identifies the basic geometric shapes of triangle, circle, square, and rectangle; and matches items with similar attributes (e.g., matches the triangles).	Reading 63 or above Writing 76 or above Mathematics 62 or above
Proficient	The student identifies signs and symbols; identifies letter sound relationships; blends sounds to make words; identifies a detail using pictures, symbols, or words from a story read aloud; identifies own name in print; and displays an understanding of print directionality.	The student reproduces/copies words using upper and lower case letters; writes/reproduces own first name; and orients graphics in legible format (right-side up, left to right).	The student rote counts single digit numbers to five; copies numbers; identifies first and last; identifies the basic geometric shapes of triangle, circle, and square; and matches items with the same attributes (e.g., matches blue triangles).	Reading 32-62 Writing 38-75 Mathematics 33-61
Below Proficient	The student handles books/literacy materials correctly; holds book upright, right direction; handles books/literacy materials correctly but without demonstration of directionality; identifies pictures and letters; points to words randomly, and is developing phonological awareness.	The student reproduces/copies upper and/or lowercase letters; and writes/reproduces simple strokes that form letters.	The student counts numbers less than five; identifies first or last, but not both; and identifies one of the basic geometric shapes (triangle, circle, or square).	Reading 8-31 Writing 7-37 Mathematics 6-32
Far Below Proficient	There is a significant need for additional instructional opportunities to achieve the proficient level.	There is a significant need for additional instructional opportunities to achieve the proficient level.	There is a significant need for additional instructional opportunities to achieve the proficient level.	Reading 7 or below Writing 6 or below Mathematics 5 or below

Alaska's Alternate Reading, Writing, and Mathematics
Proficiency Level Descriptors – Grades 5 and 6

Proficiency Level	Reading	Writing	Math	Score Ranges
Advanced	The student reads a simple sentence of 3-5 or more words; identifies beginning and end of the sequence of events in the text; identifies or reads words of increasing complexity (e.g., more letters, more syllables); answers who, what, where questions about a passage read aloud; and follows 2-step written directions.	The student uses more conventions of writing (e.g., capitalization, end mark punctuation, letter/word order); and communicates ideas to others by producing a well-organized graphic product that uses complete sentences.	The student counts to 20 or above; graphs simple information; performs simple addition (using the numbers 1-12); creates a simple pattern; identifies more and less; identifies and names coins (penny, nickel, dime, and quarter); identifies value of coins; performs single-digit subtraction; and identifies where an object is located relative to another object (e.g., in and out, over and under).	Reading 77 or above Writing 67 or above Mathematics 61 or above
Proficient	The student identifies or reads simple sight words; reads simple sentences of 2-3 words; identifies the main idea and/or main character from a passage read aloud; and follows 1-step written directions.	The student communicates ideas to others by producing a story/event through the use of pictures and/or symbols; uses some basic conventions of writing (e.g., consistent use of capitalization and end mark punctuation, spacing/alignment, left to right); uses beginning (early phonetic) spelling as evidenced by the use of mostly consonants with a few vowels; and writes/reproduces own name, first and last.	The student rote counts single-digit numbers to 12; reads and writes/reproduces single-digit numbers; identifies first, second, and last; identifies the basic geometric shapes of triangle, circle, square, and rectangle; matches items with similar attributes (match the triangles); counts objects to five; identifies bigger/smaller, shorter/taller, and more; reads simple graphs or charts; reproduces simple patterns; identifies coins (penny, nickel, dime, and quarter); performs simple addition with the numbers 1-5; and identifies where an object is located relative to another object (in and out).	Reading 46-76 Writing 33-66 Mathematics 25-60
Below Proficient	The student displays an understanding of print directionality; identifies signs and symbols; identifies letters; identifies a detail using pictures, symbols, or words from a story read aloud; and identifies own name in print.	The student copies/reproduces words using upper and lower case letters; writes/reproduces own first name; and orients graphics in legible format (right-side up, left to right).	The student demonstrates the concept of one; rote counts to five; identifies first and last; identifies two geometric shapes; and identifies same/different.	Reading 11-45 Writing 10-32 Mathematics 8-24
Far Below Proficient	There is a significant need for additional instructional opportunities to achieve the proficient level.	There is a significant need for additional instructional opportunities to achieve the proficient level.	There is a significant need for additional instructional opportunities to achieve the proficient level.	Reading 10 or below Writing 9 or below Mathematics 7 or below

Alaska's Alternate Reading, Writing, and Mathematics
Proficiency Level Descriptors – Grades 7 and 8

Proficiency Level	Reading	Writing	Math	Score Ranges
Advanced	The student decodes unfamiliar words using knowledge of letter-sound relationships (phonics), and word structure (base word, prefix, suffix); answers who, what (e.g., main idea), when, where, questions; identifies the theme or makes prediction about a reading passage; summarizes text accurately in correct sequence; and follows 3 or more step written directions.	The student uses a variety of simple sentences that support a topic; communicates by using a variety of words; uses conventions (e.g., capitalization, appropriate spacing, variety of ending punctuation marks such as exclamation and question mark); and correctly spells commonly used words.	The student skip counts by twos, fives, and tens; extends a simple pattern; interprets a simple graph; uses and applies basic units of measurement (e.g., time measurement, temperature, distance, and volume); identifies value of a combination of paper currency and coins; performs double-digit addition and subtraction with regrouping; and identifies whole, one-half, and one-quarter.	Reading 52 or above Writing 76 or above 74 or above
Proficient	The student reads a simple sentence of 4-5 or more words; identifies beginning, middle, and end of the sequence of events in the text; obtains information using text features including pictures (illustrations for text), visual cues (e.g., chapter headings, bolded or italicized text); identifies or reads words of increasing complexity (e.g., 5 or more letters, or 2 or more syllables); identifies answers to who, what, where questions about a reading passage; and follows 2-step written directions.	The student communicates ideas by using complete sentences; communicates by choosing appropriate word choice related to the topic; and uses conventions of writing (e.g., capitalization, appropriate spacing, use of periods, and correct orientation of written letters and/or other graphics).	The student counts to 20 or above and skip counts by fives and tens; reads and writes/reproduces two-digit numbers; reads and writes two-digit numbers; identifies place value of ones and tens; creates simple tables, charts, or graphs; identifies which category of a table has the most or least; performs double-digit addition and subtraction without regrouping; identifies symbols +, -, and =; identifies units of measurement (e.g., time, money, linear, or distance); identifies value of a combination of coins; identifies paper currency (1, 5, 10, and 20); labels empty set as none or zero; identifies where an object is located relative to another object (e.g., in and out, over and under, in front of, and beside); and identifies whole and one-half.	Reading 33-61 Writing 41-75 Mathematics 52-73
Below Proficient	The student decodes simple words; identifies or reads simple sight words; reads simple sentences of 2-3 words; identifies story elements (main idea and/or main character) from a passage read aloud; and follows 1-step written directions.	The student communicates ideas to others (a story/event) by the use of one or two pictures and/or symbols; and uses some conventions of writing (e.g., capitalization and punctuation, spacing/alignment, left to right).	The student rote counts single-digit numbers; reads and writes/reproduces single-digit numbers; identifies first, second, and third in activities; identifies the basic geometric shapes of triangle, circle, and square; matches items with like attributes; and identifies coins (penny, nickel, dime, and quarter).	Reading 12-32 Writing 16-40 Mathematics 22-51
Far Below Proficient	There is a significant need for additional instructional opportunities to achieve the proficient level.	There is a significant need for additional instructional opportunities to achieve the proficient level.	There is a significant need for additional instructional opportunities to achieve the proficient level.	Reading 11 or below Writing 15 or below Mathematics 21 or below

Alaska's Alternate Reading, Writing, and Mathematics
Proficiency Level Descriptors – Grades 9 and 10

Proficiency Level	Reading	Writing	Math	Score Ranges
Advanced	The student answers who, what, when, where, and why questions about a reading passage; uses strategies for decoding unfamiliar words and reads sentences with increasingly complex text; understands the difference between fact and opinion; and follows more complex written directions.	The student shows increasing complexity in sentence structure; consistently uses supporting details that are related to the topic; consistently organizes information about a topic in a variety of forms for different audiences and purposes that communicates a clear message; and corrects errors in spelling, capitalization (including proper nouns), end punctuation, and commas.	The student performs addition of multiple single-digit numbers; uses simple patterns to solve problems; determines the amount of money needed for a purchase; divides single-digit numbers by single-digit numbers; and identifies whole, one-half, one-quarter, one-third, and three-fourths.	Reading 57 or above Writing 82 or above Mathematics 81 or above
Proficient	The student answers who (main character), what (main idea, problem and solution), when and where (setting) questions about a reading passage; identifies the theme and makes predictions about a reading passage; summarizes text accurately in correct sequence; decodes unfamiliar words using knowledge of letter-sound relationships (phonics) and word structure (base word, prefix, suffix); and follows multi-step written directions to complete a task.	The student produces a variety of simple sentences that support a topic; communicates ideas for different audiences by using a variety of purposes that clearly communicates a message; uses simple editing strategies, such as checking for correct capitalization, punctuation and spelling.	The student performs double-digit addition and subtraction with regrouping; uses and applies basic units of measurement (e.g., time, measurement, temperature, distance, or volume); multiplies single-digit numbers by single-digit numbers; rounds numbers to the nearest ten; and identifies whole, one-half, one-quarter, and three-quarters.	Reading 43-56 Writing 47-81 Mathematics 63-80
Below Proficient	The student reads simple sentences of 2-3 words; answers one who, what, or where question about a passage read aloud; and follows 1- and 2-step written directions.	The student exhibits a limited or an unfocused idea that does not support a topic; communicates own ideas by using incomplete and complete sentences; and edits some errors in punctuation and capitalization.	The student reads and writes two-digit numbers; identifies size (bigger and smaller); reads a simple graph; identifies properties of basic geometric shapes (triangle, circle, and square); finds and supplies the missing element in a repeating pattern; and sorts coins by their value.	Reading 22-42 Writing 24-46 Mathematics 24-62
Far Below Proficient	There is a significant need for additional instructional opportunities to achieve the proficient level.	There is a significant need for additional instructional opportunities to achieve the proficient level.	There is a significant need for additional instructional opportunities to achieve the proficient level.	Reading 21 or below Writing 23 or below Mathematics 23 or below

Science Proficiency Level Descriptors and Cut Score Ranges

The following descriptors for science describe the skills necessary at each of the achievement levels: Advanced, Proficient, Below Proficient, and Far Below Proficient. Science is assessed only in grades 4, 8, and 10.

Proficiency Levels	**Grade 4**	**Grade 8**	**Grades 10**
Advanced	The student displays a highly developed conceptual understanding by identifying: objects that need energy to work, states of matter, effects of forces on objects, similarities and differences among organisms, water and land on a map, changes in living things, needs of all organisms, how habitats meet the needs of plants and animals, types of weather relating to seasons, earth, sun and moon; matching: tools to function, information about what is seen, heard, felt; answering questions about what can be observed; observing features in the local environment; grouping objects by single characteristics; using a symbol to represent information/data; collecting local or traditional stories that explain natural events.	The student displays a highly developed conceptual understanding by identifying: the basic characteristics of common objects, familiar electronic devices and the type of energy they produce, an object as a liquid, solid or gas, the purpose of different animal adaptations, that seasons repeat each year in a pattern, characteristics of the solar system, steps in the problem solving process; recording, observing, and describing the movement of an object by its position and speed; contrasting inherited traits with those that are not; describing how habitats provide for organisms' basic needs; sequencing stages within life cycles; observing a model of the rock cycle; recognizing how the Earth's surface can change as a result of geological activity; distinguishing between stars, planets, and moons; sequencing the use of tools to solve a multi-level task; describing technology in everyday life; connecting a local or traditional story that explains a natural event; making a record of observations over time; and asking questions about the natural world.	The student displays a highly developed conceptual understanding by identifying: components of the food chain, the water cycle is connected to the rock cycle, conditions and the effect of weather, stars, planets, moon, comets and meteors; observing and describing student's own world; supporting the student's own ideas with observations and facts; classifying: objects by their physical properties, familiar electronic devices and the type of energy they produce; recognizing that temperature changes affect phases of substances; predicting the effects of forces on the motion of objects; recognizing that species survive by adapting to the changes in their environment; observing and classifying seasonal adaptations; describing: how the Earth's surface can change as a result of geological activity, the effects of lacking technology in everyday life; and relating a local or traditional story to a scientific explanation.
Score Ranges	*Advanced: 44 or above*	*Advanced: 44 or above*	*Advanced: 44 or above*

Proficient	The student demonstrates a basic conceptual understanding by applying the processes of science during simple investigations, including demonstrating an understanding of cause-and-effect, (e.g., when more water is added to a full glass, the water will spill out) by identifying: that living things reproduce, objects according to like or different, states of matter, differences between living/nonliving things, a variety of Earth's features and features in the natural world and types of weather; matching plants and animals to their habitats; using: a variety of simple tools; identifying what materials found on earth are used for, symbols to represent information/data; demonstrating: transfer of energy (e.g., switch use), and ways objects can move.	The student demonstrates a basic conceptual understanding by applying the processes of science during simple investigations by identifying: the physical changes commonly found in the environment, that organisms differ from one species to another, features of geophysical events, the earth, sun, and moon, seasonal characteristics, uses of technology; responding appropriately to questions based on observations; indicating differences in environmental conditions; using simple descriptors to relate information about an object; identifying familiar electronic devices; observing and describing directional movement of objects; sequencing stages of the life cycle; connecting living organisms to their environment;; selecting: appropriate solution to a problem, appropriate tool to solve a problem; telling a local or traditional story that explains an event; and arranging data to communicate a sequence of events.	The student demonstrates a basic conceptual understanding by identifying: the basic characteristics of common objects, describing the way in which objects get energy, an object as a liquid, solid or gas, purpose of different animal adaptations, herbivore, carnivore, and omnivore, characteristics of the solar system, steps in the problem solving process; recording, describing and classifying observations; observing and describing the movement of an object; contrasting inherited traits with those that are not; sequencing stages within life cycles; recognizing how the Earth's surface can change as a result of geological activity; distinguishing between stars, planets, and moons; connecting a local or traditional story that explains a natural event; making a record of observations over time; and answering questions about the natural world.
Score Ranges	*Proficient: 24-43*	*Proficient: 29-43*	*Proficient: 26-43*

Below Proficient	The student shows a fundamental understanding by identifying: the difference between plant and animal, living things, nonliving things, natural world and man made environment; demonstrating: ability to investigate by looking at, touch, hearing, or smelling things in the environment; observing: states of matter, the operation of switches by others, objects in movement, a simple problem being solved; using: a variety of tools; and listening to a local or traditional story that explains a natural event.	The student shows a fundamental understanding by identifying: and naming liquid and solid, objects need energy to work, effects of force on objects, similarities and differences among organisms, changes in living things as they age, that all organisms need food, types of weather, earth, sun and moon, between man made and natural objects, when an object is revolving around another, solutions to a problem; matching a simple tool to its function; describing: characteristics of rocks, information about what is seen, heard, felt, observing features in a local environment; grouping objects by a single characteristic; collecting local or traditional stories that explain a natural event; and using a symbol to recognize data.	The student shows a fundamental understanding by identifying: the physical changes commonly found in the environment, organisms differ from one species to another, plants need sunlight to grow, differences between stars and planets, seasonal characteristics, uses of technology; recording observations; responding appropriately to questions based on observations; indicating differences in environmental conditions; using simple descriptors to relate information about an object; describing the way in which objects get energy; observing and describing directional movement of objects; sequencing the stages of a life cycle; connecting living organisms to their environment; relating features on a map to actual features on Earth; selecting: appropriate solution to a problem, appropriate tool to solve a problem; telling a local or traditional story that explains a natural event; arranging data to communicate a sequence of events; and answering questions about the natural world.
Score Ranges	*Below: 12-23*	*Below: 16-28*	*Below: 18-25*
Far Below Proficient	There is a significant need for additional instructional opportunities to achieve the proficient level.	There is a significant need for additional instructional opportunities to achieve the proficient level.	There is a significant need for additional instructional opportunities to achieve the proficient level.
Score Ranges	*Far Below: 11 or below*	*Far Below: 15 or below*	*Far Below: 17 or below*